oL IV. No. 5

Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits, — Mark Twain.

**MARCH 1948** 

# How a Jew Came to God

## An Intellectual Experience

### A LEXICOGRAPHER'S SEARCH

AM a Jew. Not that anyone cares, least of all myself, and my abrupt declaration serves only to introduce the story of an intellectual experience, not a sermon nor anything suggestive of a purpose. My excuse for bringing the matter up at this time is that there is some talk about a "Jewish problem," and the recrudescence of this phrase, with its socially impleasant connotations, has again got me to asking myself what it is that I am when I name myself, or am named, a Jew. For the better part of a half century I have tried to capture the invariable positives and negatives of the human being so labelled, but, so far, my intellectual curiosity has not been answered. I admit that this curiosity was whetted on the emery wheel of unpleasant experiences, but it is still lively after the years have turned these experiences into pleasant reminiscences.

Maybe I would have forgotten the whole thing if some people who call themselves Christian, which defies definition almost as stubbornly, did not make it their business to re-fasten the label on me whenever through forgetfulness I have allowed the edges to become loose. They seem to care a great deal more than I do. And they show their concern in ways that are often ingenious and with a sense of delicacy; and sometimes they are not so nice about it. There's the fellow who explains, when he invites me to lunch, that he is not taking me to his club - I did not know he belongs to one - because "there's a stupid feeling among the members, which of course I do not share, that might prove embarrassing, and I wouldn't have that for all the world." Or the one who in a complimentary mood assures me that I am not a Jew but "like one of us." And the cliche "some of my best friends are Jews" is definitely used to properly place me. Thus, by innuendo, inference or direct statement, or even a knowing look, I am gratuitously reminded that I am what I am whenever the fact slips my mind. All my years I have been called, and have called myself, a Jew, and that, according to some authorities, establishes the fact. But, the question will not down, what do these three letters describe or define? I've asked the question of many people and have got almost as many different answers, not one of which squares with observable fact.

Subjectively, I know that "I am"; but as for "a Jew," I have no consciousness of it at all, it has never been revealed to me; I have learned it by rote only. Hunger, fatigue, headache and itch are quite real. There is no mistaking these facts of consciousness. But never have I experienced a similar perception of Jewishness. There may be people to whom perceptions of race, religion or nationality are as definite as the taste of ice cream, but I am inclined to believe that these ideas are like lipstick or a cout something one puls on and takes off. Or has but on, like shackles. Be that as it may, I am described of any smooty perception of Jewishness.

LOOK into the mirror and see there the reflection of features similar to those worn by others called Jews. Yes, my face has a marked resemblance to my father's, also to my brothers', and my children bear the same features. Maybe, then, there are certain distinctions of physiognomy which, if they could be captured in words, would settle this matter of definition. However, I observe features quite suggestive of my own worn by people who are not called Jews; the exclusiveness becomes uncertain. My people came from Russia, and I notice that many Russian Christians, on the basis of their facial characteristics, could easily pass for blood relations. Then I see Jews with straight, thin noses, dark skins and slender contours, features usually associated with Latin peoples; the Jewish girl I married was sometimes taken for a Spaniard. Again, there is the hooked proboscis of the German Jew which is equally characteristic of the Aryan faces. The search for a definition must go beyond features.

I said my people came from Russia, from the southern part, around Odessa. In the eighth and ninth centuries that part of the world was occupied by a pagan people known as the Khazars. The record classifies them as Tartars, but as the territory embraced a transit between the Black Sea and the Caspian, there is some doubt as to the singleness of their blood, for in all probability it was tainted with Persian, Hun, Armenian, Slavonic and whatever other kind came down this path of war and trade. Now, legend has it that many of these Khazars were converted to Judaism; some say the entire tribe was. Can it be, then, that far back among my progenitors I could find an adulterated Tartar? Perish the thought! Yet we know that marriage is a matter of propinquity, not of race; and if the Russian Jew bears a likeness to his Christian compatriot, the idea of consanguinity cannot be put away. Taking into consideration the fact of biological transmission of physical characteristics, can we not say that in his matings the Jewish male, like all other males, has not been scrupulously race-conscious? And Jewish girls are not hard to look at either. But, why belahor the point? Solomon, we are told, had three hun-dred wives and a thousand concubines. He picked them for their beauty only, and he went far and wide to get them. So, we Jews got pretty well mixed up with non-Jews long, long before the dispersion, and have been as continuously guilty of intermarriage as the people we inter-married with. It seems, then, that a racial definition, in the sense of a continuous stream of the same kind of blood, will hardly hold.

Well, then, how about a definition based on religion? And the rejoinder is, which Jewish religion are you talking about? A vehile ago I was reading about the ritual in the Holy Temple at the time of Pontus Pilate and it occurred to me that a reincurnated high priest of the timesecould find himself more at home at a Catholic high mass than in the modern temple of the

"better class" Jew. Imagine the mortification of a bewhiskered and skull-capped Polish Jew in the house of worship frequented by his hatless son, where the women's chests are exposed and where no rail or elevation separates the sexes. It's as much as to ask him to eat pork chops which the son does. In proportion to their numbers, the Jews can probably lay claim to as many schisms as do the Christians, to say nothing of the many who own up to no sect.

Then there is the attempt to give the Jew a nationalistic definition. If I adhere to this idea I say to myself: I am part of a political entity which lost its physical reality some two thousand years ago; this nation exists in the record of its past, its cultural continuity and in its welladvertised manifest destiny. It is a nation without the physical appurtenances of one. Examining that fancy, I ask myself, can two thousand years of history be wiped out, as if it never happened? What warrant have we in nature for the persistence of national entities? Has not every state carved out its career with the sword. and when that sword lost its edge did not the state disappear? It is interesting to read about the ancient Greeks, to study the records of Aztec culture or the unearthed artifacts of lost empires. I would like to know why these social integrations disappeared, why such highly developed civilizations could not maintain themselves. Such information might help me foretell the course of the civilization of which I am a part. But I feel no call to fight for the restoration of a state which exists only in poetry. Citizenship in a state without authority is a contradiction. Furthermore, the ideology involved in the proposed restoration smacks too much of Hitlerian nationalism based on racial purity, reinforced with claims to divine selection. It defies the record and is decidedly dangerous.

And so it has been all these years. An examination of the suggested definitions amounts to a process of elimination, and it is not surprising that mysticism is resorted to by many; accordingly, the Jew is endowed with a soul which is sui generis and undefinable. Maybe so, But I confess to an incapacity in such super-sensory perceptibility. When things get beyond the rational I am lost. . . . And so, I have come to the conclusion that I am a Jew because I call myself one, and so does everybody else who cares to classify me, and that is all there is to it. I have hit upon a description of the Jew which, while lacking the conciseness of a definition, helps to identify his particularism. We'll go into that after I have got along with my story.

#### EARLY BACKGROUND

THE lower west side of New York at the turn of the century was going through the usual transition of a fine residential section into an area of low priced tenemonts, rooming house and marginal factories. The street where I spent my pre-high action days was already entering the factory phase. A few streets away the vectors of early New York strictures a held on to

Its hrownstone eleganic; that was nearly twenty years before enterprising realters rescued these anachronisms from well-deserted demolition. They painted the fronts white and the shutters green, and invested the section with profitable romance by reviving its ancient name of Greenwich Village. I never heard the name when I went to school in that section.

There were two Jewish families besides mine in the neighborhood, and one moved uptown before I got to high school. Irish, French and Italian emigrants had taken over, sometimes creating distinct nationalistic islands on contiguous streets, sometimes getting all mixed up as they did on my street. Much to the chagtin of my mother, my associates were not only not of my people, but were inclined to practices not sanctioned by the Talmud or any other moral code. The only reason I did not accompany some of my companions to the reformatory was that I was not apprehended in the business of selling lead pipe purloined from partially built or empty houses.

One had to fight to live in this environment and the "Item" entitled and accompant contents and the "Item" entitled and accompant and the "Item" entitled and accompanies and the services and accompanies and accompan

One had to fight to live in this environment, and the "Iew" epithet was as good a casus belli as any other. But, the matter rarely came up in a purely descriptive form, the viciousness of the accompanying adjectives rather than the word itself being the real challenge. I was yet to learn the flavor of real anti-Semitism. The fact that I didn't go to church on Sunday marked me off, but I recall being envied for that good fortune. I could and would fight, I was good at the games we played, and when the gang had some collective purpose to pursue I was expected to do my share. Race consciousness never entered into our affairs.

I knew I was a Jew. There was no questioned.

of into our affairs.

I knew I was a Jew. There was no question about that but it did not bother me. It did bother my mother, of course. She had a rabbi come to the house to teach me Hebrew. My apostasy began right there and then, not only because this added education interfered with my ball games, but also because of my objections to the pedagogical method of the rabbi. He insisted on my learning Hebrew by sight and sound, rather than by understanding of the text, and progress was made difficult by my impertunent interrogations. I began to suspect that these hieroglyphics hid objectionable ideas.

An incident of this period did much to

pectionable ideas.

An incident of this period did much to undermine whatever inclination I may have had toward the ancient tradition. One very cold night the rabbi tottered into our house in a pitful condition; it took a half dozen glasses of boiling tes to thaw him out. He then told how a sympathetic "goy" had offered him a pair of gloves and why he had refused the gift; a Jew must not be the instrument of bringing a "mitzvah," or blessing, on a non-believer. That was the first time, I believe, that I came smack up against the doctrine of the "chosen people," and it struck me as stupid and mean. The real and permanent education of

ple," and it struck me as stupid and mean. The real and permanent education of the child consists in the fermentation of ideas put into its mind by experience; against that all book learning is as nothing. For instance, I remember well my last trip to the synagogue, when I was eleven years of age, on Yum Kippur. The ritual was of ancient sintage; women and children worshipped in the balcony, while the shoeless, shawled and skull-capped men on the main floor faced the walls as they instanted the prayers to the metronomic awaying of their bodies. Not all of the men followed custom so meticulously, but the more devout could be so identified. One of these attracted my attention because he was head of the other Jewish family on my street. This fellow came by a bad reputation in the community, for

My mother finally got her wayward son into high school. These four years were indeed happy ones, Contact with loys of more reputable background weaned me away from docks, warchouses, gang warfare and trial by fistientife. Football helped to reflate the ego which had somewhat collapsed in this more ratified atmosphere, the scelain of the crowd on Saturday afternoons was reassuring. I began to take a more than perfunctory interest in books I even became conscious of marks. I took part in extra-curricular activities other than athletics, such as the school paper and a literary society, and all in all enjoyed, high school immensely. During these years not once, as far as I can recall, did the matter of discrimination make itself felt.

Henra Leaunine

Then came college. To me matriculation was quite an experience, almost a hallowed event. In those days most logs who went to college did so because that was in the tradition of their class and matriculation was like the first shave, something one did because one had arrived. Boys of my world almost always completed their formal education at four-teen, a few more put in four years of high school (or less, if circumstances demanded), and a smaller number whose parents were ambitious for them got to college. Higher education was hard to come by; only those who showed special ability, as evidenced in competitive examinations, were subsidized. Society had not yet taken on the collective duty of raising its mornic level. Hence, for those of us who were determined to "work our way through" the mere fact of baving entered was an exhibitanting experience.

Nothing happened during the first few weeks to indicate that social life in college would be much different from what it was in high school. I went out for football, fully confident that I would make the grade. In my relations with the squail I was diffident, not because of any race consciousness, but because I felt out of place in an atmosphere where tradition counted. I was a bit afraid of it. In high school this hack was brough home to me in a poignant way. Through our mutual interest in literature another lad and I struck up a close acquaintanceship, and one afternoon be invited me to dine with his folks. It was not the quiet elegance of the home what most impressed me, although that was considerably different from the utilitarian surroundings I associated with home. What struck me with force was the casy courtesy that graced the relationship between my friend, his older brother and their mother. It wasn't manners, it was manner. This was all new to me and I was filled with fear that I might prove myself out of place. Particularly so when the two boys came to dinner dressed in their dinner-coats (which I believed were worn only at class and fratern

without being chirilah, and the best I could do was to take it out on the opposing players when necessity compelled the cosch to put me into the game. The open attack—the "goddam few"—came on Friday afternoon. The varsity soach—we had no rule barring freshmen those days—kept me for special instruction; I was being taught the fine art of throwing my hody into mass plays, and for that purpose a skeletin offense we opposed to me. On the very first rehearsal I felt a fist on my jaw. It happened again, and the third time the epithet was thrown with the fist. Whatever polish I had acquired in the past few years left me completely, and with the choicest language of my past I sailed into the senior to whom I traced the offense. To my chagtin, he wouldn't fight. I thought later that the whole thing may have been a prearranged

my past I sailed into the senior to whom I traced the offense. To my chagtin, he wouldn't failst. I thought later that the whole thing may have heen a prearranged affair, to test my foughness, for the next day I was put into the varsity game. But at the time I was burned up.

There were other incidents, on the field and on the campus. One that sticks in my memory after all these years occurred about three months after the start of the term. A fellow with whom I had been very friendly at high school, a member of my fraternity there, passed me as I was crossing the campus with another friend, without acknowledging my salutation. I said to my companion: "What's the matter with Carl, is he deaf?" "No, not deaf, but didn't you see that fraternity pledge pin on his lapel? He can't he friendly with a Jew now." That hurt.

Soon I learned that discrimination was not confined to the students. Some of the Jewish upper-classmen protested openly against the wave of anti-Semitism that year—I learned later that it was a regular autumnal phenomenon—and were for doing something about it. They called a receting, I would have laughed at such a thing in high school, but I went to this one. That is something the persecutors do not understand—that persecution makes a minority: as the professional Jewa well know, if Jewa are unmolested they tend to lose all sense of commonality and go their separate ways; they coalesce in proportion to the pressure put upon them. At this meeting a committee was appointed to consult with a Jewish professor, a man of international repute, on ways and means. "Forget it," advised the professor, "and it will die down. Let me tell you something, We Jewish members of the faculty are invited to all faculty functions, but we always decline, because we are expected to decline."

A Mission Is Bons

#### A Mission Is Born

A Mission Is Bonn

B V THE end of my freshman year I had about soured on college life. Being hisky and pugnacious, I found relief in fixticults, whenever the opportunity presented itself, which was rare, because the affronts were subtle and intangible; I don't doubt that senativeness found slights where none were intended. It occurred to me later that if I had developed in my earlier years a sense of comradeship with Jews as Jews, adjustment to this new world would not have gone so hird. I realized, too late, that I would have done better by myself if I had not ventured into the sacred temple of foutballism. One is never hurt if one keeps one's place. If must have been particularly difficult for the rich Jewish logs who tried to huy their way into forbidden social circles and were despised for it by their own kind, as well as by the others.

Beginning with my sophomore year I would be the sacred temple for my sophomore year I would be selessed for the problem feet my sophomore year I would be selessed for the problem feet my sophomore year I would be selessed for my sophomore year I would be selected to the selected to this selected to the select

courses; I had already come to the a primit canclusion that religion was white bottom of social discords. Maybe, the philosophy would help me solve the rid

philosophy would help me solve the raddle.

I remember particularly a course la the history of philosophy. The sessions were held late in the afterneon for the commence of students from the theological seminary. There were also some olders as dents, specials, with hereiteal tendenies, and only the diplomatic skill of the professor prevented the metaphysical bands from becoming brands. The parties of arguments in the corridors provided the real fum of the course; and here the atheists had the best of it, probably lacause they were more emphatic. The sharpest of these vans a lews a special sudent about thirty years old, whose depositionerity indicated that he had a mission too. An emotional experience had given my intellectual groping a definite direction.

There was no doubt in my mind that I

There was no doubt in my mind that I had found "truth." Having found it, I was in no mood for further questionally, for contemplative reflection. All I needed now was confirmation of my discovery, for which I looked to propaganda. I was lowed whole the agnosticism of Robert Ingersoll and the "Age of Reason" became my bible against the Bible. The antielerical tales with which seventeenth and eighteenth century literature is full served as documentary proof of the perfoy of all things religious. Atheistic literature and a publication, for which I later wote an article or two, fed me with phrases that served for reason. It is easy to found a publosophy upon a half-truth, the castes thing in the world of thought. The announcements which had hurt me became only a single expression of the evil which religion had always wrought, and I linked the sufferings of the Jews with the staughter of the Huguerotts, the massacre of Christians by the followers of nohamet, the Inquisition and all the persecutions that throughout history had been done in the name of God. The Borgias can be explained psychologically or politically: I chose to explain them as the product of religious mania. Whenever I read of slaughter in the name of "God and courtry" I blamed it on God alone. Religious became the cause of all strife, the chern the altar upon which human happmess a secribeed, elericalism the embodient of all evil. The world would never be a fit place to live in until the whole kit and kaboodle were wiped out. And toward that wind-mill I tilited my lance.

I sometimes wonder whether reformance more interested in their egos that their reforms. My judgment in the mater would be biased. At any rate, I think I was quite sincere in my anti-God crussed I sought converts. In Chicago—where I was employed as an advertising man, laring given up as hopeless for a len the ambition of becoming a professor of Lie lish—there was an institution known at the "mut club." Membership was volument on a park. Every warm mening or weekend men bent on impres

More Encouries

A BOILT eight years after 1 feb. 20 feee I can across a book I had how something about and had not doen by reading list. It was Prayras and by site. A friend had a copy to buy library he said he had mover read it can be well by the first of the fee of the feet of th

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that in my mind that I Having found it. I for further questioning, cellection. All I needed on of my discavery, for propaganda I swal Age of Reason" became he Bible. The anti-cler thich seventeenth and literature is full served roof of the periody of rs. Atheistic literature for which I later wrote fed me with phrases son. It is easy to found a balf-truth, the easest of thought. The annd hurt me became only of the evil which reli-rought, and I linked the lews with the slaughter the massacre of Christ ers of nohamet, the la

the personations that had been done in the he Borgius can be exthem as the product of Whenever I read of same of "God and counon God alone Religion of all strile, the church of all strice, the control of all strices is is the embediment of its would never be a fit until the whole kit and had toward that ped out. And toward that

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5 In Chicago—where I am advertising man, has hopeless for a Jew the ming a professor of Engan institution known as Membership was unlike the meetings were held warm evening over held warm evening over held warm evening of very trusted well a crowd of them. No parliament them. No parliament ry few rules of counter, with new rules of the delate. However the place of the extension of the place of the pla

and have predisposed me to it, but was mek with the interary style. Here was sections of the cameo clarity of Mar-son and the cameo clarity of Mar-an and the cameo clarity of the or of Marantey, the periods of Edmund-ur of Marantey, the periods of Edmund-ur of Marantey in the Ventorianism a lacke, and with all this Ventorianism a scored ferrar that was earling. I knowas more interested in how this man gas George some fellow who. I had gain the control of the control of the and, had run for mayor of New York and it than in what he had to say. pobably a nineticenth century cosayint, I armised whom I had missed and the deney had to be made up. I borrowed to back for a week or two.

For six months I read and re-read this less than the neglect of the "not". Same technicalises in exposure aboved my progress, and a rather involved discussion of the nature of interest open floring me. There were, too, examinal parsecyries about Good and the attail order which I passed off as nine with century flubdubbery with which is states sugar-coated his decidedly radical ideas. Through it all there was a como in the reasoning that could not be dealed. I became convinced the author of something.

and then came a thought which dis-mbed my enthusiasm. If Mr. George was not, that poverty and the fear of it stire social hatreds, then bigory is a mere-distribution and assessed. scale and organized religion is a basic cause. That tended to upset the rase I had built up. Suppose, I said a myself, I were to level all the churches, a gyell, I were to level all the churrhes, at the presthood out of business, con-ince receptody that religion is poison, are would still be the problem of pov-ery there would still be an environment in makes for tough boys and another that produced dimere-coated young gentle as And maybe, I continued, the troubles shick I had been laying at the door of the countying pious is in fact the product of poverty, as Mr. George claimed Tell at any rate, there were now two seases to my how, economics and religion, and I could vary my distribes, just for a

I mel out my newly acquired theory the park. The defense of an idea be-conviction of its correctness. Even when I knew the answers I managed to since I knew the answers I managed to any questions with plausabilities which, smerly enough, I frequently found cornivation for in the book, to which I had under often. The crowd seemed to be much more interested in this poverty incentidated plenty argument than in attacks on the institution of religion, and a might be that this greater interest had me influence on my intellectual switch; on a crusader likes to please a crowd, and in fact, likes a crowd to please. I granully gove up on religion and put my value gitter to economics and social problem. These were subjects I had paid likes. waling piew to economics and social problem. These were subjects I had paid literation to at college: now they seemed all-important and I began reading it I could find on them, including, of mass, the other books of Henry George. De thread of piety which can through his work I dismissed for years as so much resiliage. Finally, and reluctantly, it wisted on me that his religious concepts some way integrated his economics and social philosophy. His God and his stard law meant something to his scheme of bought and I determined to find out that it was even though having been seeded by pragmatiem as well as agnosium, I was sure there was nothing to it.

WHAT ABOUT "NAMERAL RIGHTS"?

WHAT AROUT "NATURAL RIGHTS"?

I FOUND to the writings of Mr. Goorge frequent references to the idea of scholer eight Upon reflection, it occurs to me that though this idea is defined, meraphysical I had been relying upon whitest question, in my quarrel with measurable. It is the principle cumulated in the Deciration of Independence, but in their public relations all peoplements as consisted equal, that none have to the product of him to personalities in the accounted equal, that none have the accounted equal, that none have the accounted equal, that none have the accounted to the principles in the states. But why? Whence the the the transfer of the principle?

nore it to their detroment. Nor is this more it to their detrument. Not is this principle a matter of expediency in social relations, as the prognatists claim, since on the ground of expediency argument could well be addressed for the suspension of equality, as when a mobility of a political party promote their own ascendance for the green's produce their own ascendance. The Declaration had another for the green's good, authority for the

for the general good:

The Declaration finds authority for this principle of equality in a Creator. Here the human attack finding no other answer to its circum attack finding no other answer to its circum attack finding no other answer to its circum attacks recourse to its imagination and invests a first cause. The athest rejects this cancept as a myth, the sensetic says 'I don't know,' But both of them, in attacking the evil practices of though for a mural yardstick. Everybody who objects to ministices does so on the ground that these practices violate some principle of fustice which is above human will. This is so even when authority for flustice which is above human will. This is so even when authority for that phrase is just as metaphysical as the mature of though."

Reasoning se, I recognized that in spite

Reasoning se, I recognized that in spite of my pragmatic leanings I too had unconsciously premised my social thinking on the assumption of a "natural order." I saw that this assumption is the essence of religious thinking, and I reflected how every social philosophy with which I was familiar likewise fell back on an extra-human pattern of things. Even the ultra-materialistic socialists, in their decrine of human pattern of things. Even the ultra-materialistic socialists, in their doctrine of historical inevitability, are guilty of trans-cendentalism. Admittedly, I reasoned, this is a flight of the finite mind from its own limitations; it is a search for security in an invariable; it is mining for bedrock in the infinite; and in so doing it must rely on its power of imagination. It does so as a matter of necessity. It must "make sense" of the world in which it lives, since it revolts at the madness induced by chaos. If it rejects the principle of essen-tial equality among men, which admitted-ly it finds only in the myth of the "nat-ural order," the human mind is led logic-ally into a mess of obvious incongruities Thus, if all men are not created equal, what objection could one make to a master-and-slave status? That a few enjoy wealth and power at the expense of the many should occasion no quarrel, since it just happened so and there is no warrant in reason for disturbing the arrangement. in reason for disturbing the arrangement, Exploitation, discrimination or social disbilities of any kind do not exist if the premise of parity is false. The only justification for a change in the status would be the force one could apply toward that end. Rejection of any cencept of absolute right reakes justice synonymous with power, and that is an incongruity the mind finds difficult to accept. In its flight from such madness the human mind finds haven in logical fiction. in lovical fiction.

In logical fletion.

I found, then, that I had built my whole case against minority disabilities on an article of faith. And there was no way of getting away from it. Whichever way I turned the argument for equality I came to the question of "rights," and soon found myself adding the adjective "natural." The hide-bound realists, with whom, up to this point, I counted myself, reject the doctrine of natural rights as autenable; but their scofing does not prove their case. While they explain "rights" as political delimitations of human behavior, they leave unexplained the justification or the political power to dispense "rights"—unless, indeed, the only justification for power is power, which is chaos again. If they adhere to the democratic theory, that "rights" inhere in the individual came by his "rights" in the first place. The realists fear of the imaginastion leaves him without invellectual raddet. I found, then, that I had built my

experience. The experience of life require that we go on looking to nature for its server, and maintaining faith that in them this immunitable law. And that, I believe, to the expense of the Goldides.

AND "NATURAL LAW"Y

And "National Law"?

T HIRTY years ago students of Heavy Ceorge foreast the conting of the New Deal, or something like it. The foresight atenumed from his chapter entitled. How Medern Civilization May Decline."

In this he reasoned that the tendancy of the wage level, regardless of productive increases, toward the point of mere substitutes, would open the way for State interference in economic affairs. Frustration and ignorance would demand it, and the politician, bent on his own purposes. the politician, bent on his own purposes would come forth with fantastic promises would come forth with fantasile promises. Since politics is incapable of raising wages, but can only impose interventions which lower the productive level from which wages come, the result must be deterioration. New and more impossible promises would supplant the discredited once. To carry them out the politicism would ask for additional powers, including a design, of course, not not provided hits. ing, of course, new tax levies. Political lib-erty would be put on the counter and of fered at the but on the counter and of-fered at the bargain price of a mess of pottage. The eventual outcome would be a dictatorship—he called it, in 1879, an imperatorship?—completely dominating all things economic, as well as political and social.

and social.

The preventive, he said, lay in dissolution of the poverty-amidst-plenty incongruity. For guidance we must look to the "natural laws" of political economy. Along with the classical school from which he stemmed he held that political economy is a science, concerned with the study of posa science, concerned with the audy of po-time principles, completely impervious to legislative tinkering. That philosophy of economics had been going out of fashien. Sprouting wings in those days was the eco-nomic planner, who began by denying the classical tenet, and dedicated himself to the idea that economics records and stud-ies the experience of traditional and leies the experience of traditional and legalized institutions; from such study it is possible to ascertain day-to-day correctives of economic dislocations. In economics (the name which supplanted the more embracing subject of "political economy") there are no constants, the embryonic planners said, no invariable principles. Thus they laid the basis for the statement made by President Roosevelt in 1933 that "there is no science of economics."

It is not germane to this story to go into the economic theories of Henry George. What I had to encompass, and what I think is the basic economic issue of the present, is the doctrine of natural law. Briefly, this is the doctrine; natural has its own ways of applying means to

law. Briefly, this is the doctrine: nature has its own ways of applying means to ends, which are made known to us by critical observation; we observe in nature the constant recurrence of certain sequences, and because of that constanty we ascribe to the sequences a cause-and-effect relationship; we describe this presumably causal relationship in words or symbols, which we call natural law. The function of the "law" is to help us predict, to apply nature's means to our own ends. Thus, when we observed that water always seeks its own level—a natural law—we were able to place our plumbing so as to bring about desired results.

Now, it is a certainty that mature does

were able to place our plumbing so as to bring about desired results.

Now, it is a certainty that mature does not ring a belt when we have hit upon one of her laws, and it is also a certainty that we have "discovered" some that subsequent investigation has shown up to be frauds. For these reasons the pragmaties reject the doctrine of natural law out of hand; there ain't me such animal, they say. They describe the constant sequences as prohabilities; what has always happened, as far as we know, will probably occur in the future, has those is a foguence of the imagination, and so is causality.

Between the pragmatist and the transcendentable three will never be more thron time. Each represent a subjective attended so desprouted that no objective nesting ground is possible. I believe I took to the satural face doctrine because of an infaccut districts of fearness, we have proposite to be satural face of octrine because of an infaccut districts of fearnesses, in making the internal transcendence of the satural face of octrine because of an infaccut districts of fearnesses, in making the internal transcendence of the satural face of octrine because of the internal transcendence of the satural face of octrine because of the internal transcendence of the satural face of octrine because of the internal face of out the second of the satural face of octrine because of the satural face of octrine octrines of the satural face of octr

done has done to the priest and the pdi-ticion, and students could be led astray if they took their professors to bear. Essa-in my cultage days I had fought is not with the sociolaric helps I kinnes the rea-nance surveys, on the ground that man's management of man is prosumptioned and fraught with stanger I would rely on some chirg tess trail, sumething free of foldless-something Impersonal That semething rould be mixing else than mature. From the is a rather chance was, difficult to de-scribe, let alone to handle, and philosophy-could argue has non-estateurs. Necesthe. sertice, the atoms to humans, and precompage could argue bor non-existence. Presentise less, she had proven herself a helpful for tion, if that is her read character, in the progress of mankind, I would trans her more than any man I eyer knew o) read-

about.

The difficulty, however, was that acceptance of the natural law destrine called for faith in an order of things outside mark and his works; and faith and I had been on the outs since I first laid all social difficulties at the door of religion. I had fortified myself against the God-idea limplied in the natural law doctrine. In my study of philosophy I met transcendentsilism with a knowing smile, Youth admits of no an conquerable ramparts of thought and at tacks every unknown with complete confidence in its offensive powers. That is the proper function of youth, for from the vigor of its self-assurance our fond of knowledge does profit. But, when maturity comes to check up on youth's achievements the sum total looks too much like agit and polish. The basic enigmas which youth and pollsh. The basic enigmas which youth inherits it passes on.

And so, I came to the God-idea because

And so, I came to the God-idea because my rejection of it put rational thinking on a mercy-go-round; there was no way of measuring the validity of an idea except by itself. The emotional storm which antisemitism had stirred up caused me to throw overboard the anchor of reason. I had confused the organization which presumed to monopolize religion with religion itself, which is merely faith in the possibility of an explanatory pattern of constancies. If nature cannot provide any guide to orderly thinking, any rules for an overall harmony, then man's eternal search for one is silly. Must we look to parliaments for guidance? We might as well resign ourselves to wandering about in a maze of contradictions and quit trying to make sense of experience.

So, Witat Is a Jew?

So, WHAT IS A JEW?

So, What Is a Jaw?

We Jikn I was convinced that the primary cause of social discord is economic. I gave thought again to the so-called Jewish problem. Admitting, I said to myself, and to those who cared to listen, that some people delight in disliking Jews or any other minority, the matter would not come to violent hatred if everybody were always fully occupied at making a living and enjoying life. There would be no time for that sort of thing. And if it were realized that under proper conditions every pair of hands, even Jewish, add to the general fund of wealth, the dislike might be replaced by a healther emotion.

Offines, however, the getting of a living under our socio-examinic arrangement is attended with frightening difficulty. At all times, except when wer or its anticipation keeps us busy, there seem to be more willing to work than our scononsy can employ, and the competition for jobs is disheartening; not only are some forced not go without but those who are employed get relatively little out of it. This is had enough in itself, but it looms atful worse when the evidence of existing plent; all too strong. To the discondict of grain without and the exasperation of furfillies is added a feeding of impastice, the addense of locating a school comes upon us. Divinity is used inamine from tide tools of minute from the beauting of minute for its proveniment. and prevensely for minute for the furfillies and minute for the states of minute for its proveniment.

tuck my job, who robbed me of my trade and my husiness? Peculiarly enough, the blame is always put on somebody who is least capable of defending himself from the charge or from any action that nuglit be taken. In Texas it may be the Mexican, in California all economic troubles came from Oriental competitors: in New England, after the Civil War and even into this century, it was the Itish. The ex-slave has been an especially easy target, and then, of course, there is the Jew. There must be a culprit, as every reformer knows; would socialism have coine as far as it has without the help of bosses, caputalists, hourgeois and fascists?

It is a very ancient custom, this business of scapegoats. According to the record, the Philistines served the brachies in that capacity, while all the troubles of the Reman plebian came out of Carthage. The peculiarity of the Jew is that he has served as scapegoat number one for nearly twenty centuries throughout the predominantly Christian world. Other minorities have been pucked on at times, but wherever the Jew has made his presence felt in numbers he has held the lead role with little competition. The pogrom has been standard procedure whenever economic difficulties burst into social disaffection. Admitting the evidence of history on this point, there still remains the question as to why the Jew has been so consistently singled out.

We cannot dislike a people until we are convinced that these people are easentially different from us. It is easy then to establish inferiority. Our military men found, for instance, that hatred of the Germans was difficult to establish an essential difference between the New Yorker and the Berliner, and tortuous argument had to be resorted to; with the Japanese the problem was quite simple for anybody so different from set in establish an essential difference between the New Yorker and the Berliner, and tortuous argument had to be established.

This problem of ideaulication was made tary by the Jew. He made himself a "different" kind of person long

mark becomes less visible as less notice is paid it; and more pronounced as persecution faces them back into themselves for mutual protection and solare. It will be recalled that when Hitler began his authornitic campaign many a German Jew had to Jearn what it is to be a Jew; the culture was foreign to him.

One item in this culture needs to be emphasized at this time, I believe it is the one that has got the Jew into difficulties. That is the tendency toward self-expression which we call individualism. It may be that this characteristic steme from his ancient education (see the Hehrew mark becomes less visible as less notic

may be that this characteristic stems from bis ancient education (see the Hebrew Prophets), and it may be that it was brought on by necessity. At any rate, the Jewish child has drilled into him almost from birth the importance of self-improve-ment through self-help. Never is the Indiment through self-help. Never is the individual taught that group excellence is more important than, or different from, individual excellence. It is he, the unit of the tribe, that makes it. Undoubtedly, this training shows up in an inordinate self-respect which, in a weak claracter, becomes irritating self-assertion. The point I wish to make is that Jewish culture is definitely not socialistic, even though tribal adherence has always been emphasized as a matter of self preservation. That many Jews have advanced socialistic ideas is true, but I believe this can be explained as an inclination to protect against in-

lews have advanced socialistic ideas is true, but I believe this can be explained as an inclination to protect against injustices, which is characteristic of the individualist. Karl Marx, it must be remembered, was an antistatist, advocating the peculiar notion of abolishing the state through an interim dictatorship. Among the Old Bolsheviks were a number of Jews, more than their proportionate population would entitle them to; but it is significant that very few of them escaped the Stalinist purges; the Jew is too individualistic to be tolerated by the collectivism he sometimes urges.

Be that as it may, the differentiation which marks the Jew is cultural. A friend of mine, a scholar and an aesthete, deplored the urge toward assimilation on the ground that the best in this culture would thereby be lost to mankind. However, it is his cultural idioms which identifies the Jew as a "different" sort of person, thus qualifying him for the role of minority scapegoat. Whether assimilation can completely eradicate these idioms is a question that cannot be decided until a long period of non-discrimination has permitted assimilation to take its course. So long as the institutions which bring about a scarcity economy are in force, the Jew will not divest himself of his historic role. The so-called Jewish problem, then—and this is true of all minority problems—is at bottom neither racial nor religious, but economics Its eradication is dependent on the solution of the poverty-amidst-plenty problem. Maybe natural law can show the sway; surely, the makeshifts of political law have failed.

MUST READING FOR EVERY INDIVIDUALIST

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# End the Republic Program

GAIN, the politicians have let us down. During the w not yet officially terminated—they promised us a glor One World in which all would be peaceful and harmon After the war, they handed us an elaborate and costly organ tion which, they assured us, would effectively prevent even a blance of war. They gave us, too, a World Bank, by which tax-money could be conveniently funnelled into the bankrupt tries of the world, telling us that the restored economies of countries would prevent a collapse of international relations.

What have we now? The UN is a farce—a tragic farce.

nothing but a club of name-calling rowdies, using the thin close protocol to disguise their jockeying for position in a conflict of seem so confidently to expect.

So, the selfsame politicians who got us into the last war, have shown absolutely no competence in the making of peace, h failed to make good on each and every promise they made us, bring forth the European Recovery Program. This thing will be us peace because, they assert, it will tie to us with bands of g some fifteeen faltering allies. That will make a gang too for

dable for Russia to tackle.

Fiddlesticks! The nations of the world, including the benefi aries of the ERP, now owe us more than \$85 billions. That is fi times as much as the ERP contemplates giving away in the B five years. Our politicians began handing out this colossal a before the first world war and have been accelerating their bour ever since. What have we got for all this money? Gratitud Allies? Friends? Russia, the potential enemy, received more th \$11 billions; another billion went to her present satellites as probable allies.

None of this money will ever come back to us. Our tariff pole makes a refund practically impossible. The bonds sold to rel this money will continue to drain our economy for hundreds years; repudiation seems to be the only way we can ever get n of this burden.

Shall we send good money after bad? What for?

WE don't want war. Another war will see the end of our r publican form of government. It will necessarily have be run on a totalitarian basis; meaning that the remnant of pe sonal liberties left us will be wiped out. Already the bureaucra built up during the last war-and getting no smaller-is the ing its nose at the legislative branch. Under a new "nab emergency" the Congress will become a rubber-stamp, just Hitler's Reichstag; the judiciary will be reduced to "interpreta the directives issued by the omniscient saviors of the country. essarily, all property will be nationalized, for how else can the of another war be met? Criticism of the holier-than-thou we amount to treason, and "national security" will require a subset

The European Recovery Program will not prevent war. not intended to prevent war. It is a war measure, pure and similar it goes through, it should really be named the End of the B public Program.

The only way to prevent war is to get out of Europe, lock, and barrel. If the people there want communism, let them Communism must destroy itself because it is incapable of duction above a bare subsistence level. If it engulfs Europ will have to write off that continent until such time as its p structure collapses entirely and a breed of sensible people r it to deceney. In the meantime, we will get stronger by the we retain and accumulate. While this may be poor solate to Europeans who have to live through communism, it will " worse for them than a war.

Meanwhile, let us not drift into that very totalitarianism w destroyed the civilization of Europe. Whatever strength w sess is due to the institutions of private property, free spect a free press. We have grown as a people because, until the war, our government was weak. The only war that will de a good is a war with Washington, Rend: Will Dollars Save the World? by Henry Haslitt, 75

This is the last number of analysis to be issued under the dollar-a-year subscrip-tion rate. After April 15 the price goes up to Two All new subscriptions and renewals re ceived before that date will accepted at the dollar

